

Under my Wing

by Namyre

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Summary: Newly seventeen-year-old Viking girl named Kazi enters in the Dragon Training Program along with some friends, and is pulled into the true companionship between a Viking and Dragon. She must teach the dragon to be her friend before the Tournament, where she aims for the grand prize: a golden emblem.

## 1. Chapter 1

**\*\*Welcome to the Isle of Berk! This story is set with the backdrop of the movie, but may include a few details from the book.\*\***

**\*\*Disclaimer: I do not own How to Train Your Dragon in any way, but all of the main characters you've never heard of are likely mine.\*\***

**\*\*You will find author's notes in the form of intros and outros repeatedly throughout this story. I recommend you read them, for they may give hints to when the next update will be. I will update as often as I can, but cut me some slackâ€”I have a life of my own(I know; shocker).\*\***

**\*\*Reviews are much appreciated.\*\***

\* \* \*

><p>Kazi Draken, a barely seventeen Viking of the wonderful Isle of Berk, awoke to the sound of her father creaking open her bedroom door. She pretended to still be asleep, as she did every morning, until he came over and gently shook her shoulder until Kazi opened her eyes. He was still good looking for his age; dark and short hair, perfectly cropped beard and a strong frame complete with emerald green eyes. Kazi smiled, yawning and stretched herself awake as her father left.<p>

She proceeded to the closet, where she pulled on a dark green strapless over her underclothes, and a v-neck leather cover on top of that. Grey leggings and two low braids completed her morning look, and she went downstairs, grabbed a wire basket, slipped on her mudboots and went outside in the thin fog to do chores.

Feed and release the chickens, collect and wash eggs. She had to go into the barn, and grab the feed bag. Kazi went through the gate, dumped the feed on the ground, and proceeded to the coop, opening the door to let the waking animals out, and reached in to collect eggs.

Big and brown, mostly clean, and a lot of them. For twelve chickens, about six eggs every morning was pretty good. There were six today, and she gently placed them in the cloth feedbag-lined basket. She then went out of the coop, and back inside the house.

By then her mother had prepared breakfast. A few of yesterday's eggs and some ham had been scrambled over the fireworm blaze. Kazi kicked off her mudboots by the door and dropped two eggs in their pit, which cracked, and the tiny dragons swarmed over each other to get sloppy bites. She then went to the wash basin and cleaned the other four, then set them in the basket again on the counter.

"Good morning, Kazandra," her mother said, a woman of perfect grace and fine beauty, as she and her husband sat at the table.

"Morning, Mom." She went over and hugged her, then hugged her father. "Morning, Dad."

"Goog mornin, Kazi gear," he replied, mouth full with eggs.

"Sonus, don't talk with your mouth full." Kazi's mother, Redia, scolded.

Kazi smiled as she sat down to eat.

As soon as he had swallowed, her father continued. "You know you turned seventeen last week, and Dragon Training camp starts in three days."

"Yes, did you finish the paperwork? And send it in?" Kazi said after her first mouthful of eggs and ham.

"That's the thing: I have decided to force you to stay home for another year with no contact with dragons other than the fireworms," he said with his signature laugh-and-wink.

"Daaad!" She knew he was joking, but played around with an overdramatic, exasperated sigh. "I've been a good girl for the past seventeen years!"

"You know he loves you too much to do that, darling," her mother came in. "He had the papers sent in yesterday. That boy that you always talk about—Thade Ardoring, is it?"—was the messenger for the day."

Thade was the absolute hottest boy on Berk, but he acted like he didn't know it. He was kind of shy around girls, actually; even though he was just a few weeks older than Kazi, had fair muscles, and

freakish good blond hair that fell in wisps over his forehead.

All of the other girls liked Preston: an even stronger boy, with no shyness, dignity, or respect for others. Sure, he had good hair, but he was a total jerk. Kazi was convinced she was in love with Thade.

"Mom, I do not always talk about him!"

"Suit yourself, child. Either way, the papers got to the Great Hall, and are being sorted as we speak." Sorting was when papers represented the child behind them, and were put into age and class categories. You do not choose a dragon, but are assigned an egg, which you must raise into adulthood to be your faithful companion. Kazi's parents never went to Dragon Training, even though it's been years since Hiccup and Toothless defeated the Red Death.

Toothless was so cool, being the only known Night Fury. Fastest of all dragons, Strike Class. Sure, Monstrous Nightmares were pretty cool, too, and Deadly Nadders. Grapple Grounders have a certain awesomeness, Changewings as well.

Kazi really had no idea what kind of dragon she'd be assigned to.

## 2. Chapter 2

After breakfast, Kazi slipped her dayboots on and went outside to meet with her friends.

Drew and Fora Arrowhead were brother and sister, Nate and Sage Forest were brother and sister, Grant Coldan was Kazi's age but his big brother Darren had a family of his own. Sidia Dre was her best friend, another only child, and the two of them could practically be sisters but were not related at all. Three boys and four girls.

Kazi jogged to the cliff edge overlooking the sea, and found six black stones in a pile, a signal that everyone but Kazi was already at the meeting place. She placed her own stone with the others, then went up to the edge until she stepped out onto a ledge which marked the path to the gang's secret hideout.

She made her way down the cliff face without difficulty, and finally came upon the hideout itself.

She went down a tunnel and a large cave opened up, well protected from the weather outside. There was a deep freshwater pool to the side, which cast rippling light over the crystal roof of the cavern. The walls were decorated with pictures of almost every kind of dragon, drawn by the hands of each member, speaking of which were sitting on small logs around a small fire, near the center of the cave. Clockwise, they went Drew, Nate, Grant, Sidia, empty seat, Sage and Forest.

"About time you got here, Kazi," Grant said with fake authority, standing with his arms crossed and with a big smirk on his face.

"Oh, stop it, you," she said, walking over to the fire and taking her

seat between Sidia and Sage. "Breakfast just took longer than expected." Grant sat back down.

"Well," Sage started, "now that we're all here, let's get down to business. Has everyone's papers gotten to the Great Hall?"

Everyone nodded and murmured assent.

Sidia spoke up. "I got mine in a week ago, as soon as Stoic started accepting them. Thade took them inâ€"you knowâ€"the one Kazi's always mooning over?"

"I do not!" Kazi burst out, flustered. \_That's two people who have noticed! Am I really that obvious?\_ She made a mental note to keep her distance for a week or so. Sidia gave her a friendly nudge, and Kazi shouldered her in return, inciting a squeak and making her fall on the stone ground.

"Okay, I'm \_sorry\_!" Sidia laughed, and Kazi pulled her back onto the log, smiling at her minor victory. The rest of the gang laughed as well.

"We need to discuss dragons," Kazi said. "After all, it won't be too long until we all have dragons of our own to care for."

Now it was Nate's turn. "I can't believe Dragon Training starts in three days! I can't wait to get a dragon; what do you think I'll get, you guys?"

"I think you'll get a Nightmare," Sage said.

"He's way too soft for one of those beasts! He'll totally get a tiny Terror." Drew elbowed Nate in the side, the 'guy' way of showing he was joking. "The biggest one of the nest, anyway."

"I think a Gronkle would fit you, Grant," said Kazi. "And a Changewing for Nate or Forest, maybe a Naddar for Sidia."

Sidia said, "Kazi, I think you'd best fit with a Night Fury. You outrun all of us in every race, no matter the circumstances." It was true, Kazi could outrun and outdistance the others hands-down, she was very athletic.

"I'm flattered, but you know as well as I do that Toothless is the only tameâ€"er, domesticâ€"one. And speed isn't the only thing to judge by when a dragon is chosen."

Forest finally spoke. "There's really nothing we can do besides wait and see what happens. It's not like we get dragons on the first day; we have to go through the Exams first, and we get a certain egg based on our results."

"We all know that, Forest," Grant said. "We're just messing around."

"We can stop messing around now," Sage said. "Let's all go to the Great Hall and go through the basics in the Dragon Manual."

With that, all seven teens got up and stretched, Forest snuffed the fire with a rubber mat, and they went outside and up the cliff. When

they got to the top, everyone grabbed a stone and tossed them into a gravel patch before heading to the Great Hall.

### 3. Chapter 3

It was Sage's turn to be teacher; she called out different dragon anatomical or behavioral traits and everyone else had to raise their hand with the correct dragon.

"Strike class, record top speed."

That one was too easy. Kazi raised her hand and Sage pointed to her. "Night Fury."

"Correct. Boulder class, heavy sleeper."

Kazi knew that one, too, but did not protest when Grant was called on first. "Gronkle."

"Yes. Mystery class, can change to match its environment."

Easy as well, but Forest was called on. "Snaptrapper?"

"No. Anyone else?"

Kazi's turn again. "Changewing."

"That was going to be my second choice," Forest said indignantly.

"Right, Kazi. Forest, make it your first choice next time, then. Next: Sharp class, largest recorded wingspan."

Drew got that one. "Timberjack."

Over the next ten or twenty minutes, more teens made their way to the Great Hall for studying, and the gang's corner became very populated. Sage switched out with Kazi, and the game continued for another five minutes until she traded places with Nate. The next hour or so went by as such, until the horn was blown for noon lunch.

The Hall got very crowded, and as soon as the seven teens got their food they headed outside to eat.

"That was fun," Nate remarked once they'd settled at a bench. "I liked being teacher, especially when all those other kids showed up."

"I agree," Sage said. "Not only did we get the studying, but we helped them, too."

"All's well that ends well," Kazi said.

As the teens ate, the dispute over who would get what dragon continued until, finally, it was settled like so: Drew with a Nightmare, Nate with a Grapple Grounder, Grant with a Timberjack, Sidia with a Naddar, Sage with a Changewing, Forest with a Thunderdrum, and Kazi with a Skrill.

The group finished their lunch among conversation, then went back to their respective houses. As Kazi made her way back, she stopped by Gobber's blacksmith.

"Now how've you been, little missy?" He asked with a friendly smile, standing from a bench.

"Fine, thanks," she said with a grin. "I'm looking for some advice in arms."

"Well, er, we have plenty of different attachments," he started with a furrowed brow, a bit confused. "Whyâ€do you need something like this little whiffer?" He held up a thin sword, but instead of a hilt, there was a thick screw. This was the kind of thing he would trade to a Viking who had lost an arm like himself, an \_attachment.\_

\_I must have mislead him with the use of the word 'arm,'\_ Kazi thought, shaking her head. "No, Gobber. I meant like an actual handheld sword or dagger."

His face lit up in understanding, and he replaced the sword. "Silly ol' me. Must've had one too many mugs o' cider last night," he said with a wink. "Come on behind the counter, lass, and let's see what I've got."

Kazi walked to the side of the hut and went into the smithery, eyes widening at the array of weapons behind the desk. Swords, daggers, axes, maces, bolas, brass knuckles, you name it. Virtually all came in handheld or attachment kinds.

"You mentioned a sword 'r dagger, right, lass?"

"Yes," Kazi responded, glancing over the walls and tables for something in her size.

"Right, then," he said. He cleared a table and put the contents on hooks around the room. He then picked out a variety of swords, daggers, and related weapons and spread them across the table. "How's this'n?"

It was about the length of Kazi's outstretched arm, and the breadth of her palm. To match its thick appearance, it was heavy. She bounced it in her hand, weighing it up and getting the feel of the hilt.

"You can try it on a log out 'ere," Gobber said, lifting a deerskin to reveal a wide array of practice dummies, all of which scarred from use. Kazi went over to a human-sized one, and lifted her wrist, bringing up the sword in a smooth motion. She brought it down hard on the decoy's shoulder and the blade hit the sturdy wood, creating a dent about a centimeter deep.

"I'd like to try a smaller one," Kazi said. "One less heavy."

Gobber led her back into the smithery, and inspected a short sword the length of the other one. The weapon was much thicker than the other sword, heavier too, so Gobber put it back onto a shelf. He did the same with a number of other weapons.

"I've got this'n, matches your preferences just well." He held out a

sword about the quarters the length of Kazi's arm, and this one was much thinner as wellâ€”about as thick as two of her fingers. She lifter the sword from Gobber's hand, and found that it was surprisingly light. She went back outside and took a swing at the same decoy she used before. The blade went right into the wood, about as far as her pinky.

"I'd take \_that\_ one, if I were you," a masculine boy's voice came from behind her.

Kazi dislodged the sword from the wood, and turned to see Preston watching her from the side of the decoy field, leaning against a dummy with a cocky grin.

"You really think so?" Kazi asked, glancing down the length of the blade. She'd look at anything besides that grin.

"Yeah, it \_matches\_ you. Small, but fast," he said, sauntering over, simply exuding cockiness.

She glanced at him, lowered her eyebrows, then went back to pretending to inspect the blade. "You know, it would be better practice to try it on something that could hit \_back\_â€”" she looked at him with the most fake feminine face she could muster.

"Ooh, \_sharp\_, too! Three for three," he stepped toward Gobber's room of sharp things. "I accept your challenge."

"As long as you kids don't really hurt each other, I'm up for a good duel." Gobber said, stepping aside to let Preston choose his weapon.

He disappeared into the darkness, only to return a moment later with a broadsword in hand. "I'd run home to grab mine, but I wouldn't want to keep a lady waiting."

Kazi huffed in annoyance. \_Nothing he could ever say would flatter me.\_ "Then lets get going," she sassed.

The two teens went to the center of the square, which happened to be right in front of Gobber's smith. Said Viking went with them, appointing himself unofficial judge when he told them where to stand and placed himself a handful of yards away.

"Shake hands, the both of you," he said. The teens did so. "This is a fair fight, not war, so don't go hacking limbs off." They nodded. "Now, step backâ€”" they went a few paces apart. "â€” And, fight!"

#### 4. Chapter 4

Preston lunged with the sword lifted almost before Gobber gave the word. Kazi, being left-handed, dipped to the right, pulling the sword up to make Preston's sword glance off in a flash of sparks. She stood again, and swung her sword around to hit Preston's shin with the flat of the blade. He grunted in pain. Then landed a square hit to her side before she could move.

\_There's one bruise,\_ she thought. \_Let's see how many I can put on

him.\_ She pulled up the sword to block another swing, and fainted right. Preston fell for the trap, and swung his sword down just as Kazi pulled out of the way, and she landed three good hits to his ribcage before he got up.

They both returned to the basic stance, and began to circle one another, anticipating moves. Kazi noticed a few familiar faces in a crowd that was slowly beginning to form. Preston swung from the left without warning, and Kazi barely managed to block it in time. Before he could make another move, Kazi swung her sword in a great arc, throwing Preston's blade off.

While he was off balance, she took the opportunity to dart behind him and jab the inside of the knee he had his weight on. His leg buckled, and he landed flat on his back in the dirt, arousing cheers in the crowd. Kazi planted her foot firmly on Preston's chest, pinning him, leaned over to pick up his sword, and tossed it in the direction of Gobber's smith.

She pointed her sword tip to his neck. "I shall now claim my trophy," she hissed to the older boy.

"Let me \_up\_," he grunted, obviously embarrassed, and possibly enraged, at being pinned by a girl.

She removed her foot, and Preston coughed once as he stood.

"I've got a trophy for ye," Gobber said. "You can keep that blade o' yoursâ€"no price."

"Thanks, Gobber," she said.

She calmly walked through the crowd, and headed off toward home.

"Wait, Kazi!"

She expected Preston to be behind her, making some excuse for losing, but instead she saw Thade Ardoring. "Um, yeahâ€"?" She asked.

"Those moves were awesome. Where did you learn them?" His blond hair gleamed in the afternoon sun, making him look even more boyishly handsome.

"My dad and I used to spar all the time, but we don't do it so often anymore. I'm surprised all I took was one solid hit." Kazi still plainly remembered all the hours she and her father had put into swordplay, and all the complaining her mother did about it. The eventual reasoning was concluded that everyone needed to be able to fight, kid or no kid, girl or not.

"That's cool." He looked at his feet, out of ideas, but there was obviously something on his mind.

Kazi helped him with what she presumed to be troubling him. "If you \_want\_â€" I can teach you some. We could spar, get good at it, and show up boneheads like Preston."

His face lit up, and Kazi knew she had hit home. "That'd be awesome! When could we start? Where?"



"Maybe tomorrow, we could meet over there"â€"she pointedâ€"by the seacliff. We can get to a secluded place from there, away from prying eyes, except for a few friends of mine, if that's okay with you. Does noon sound good?"

"Sure, that'd beâ€| great," he finished. Thade turned and quietly walked back towards his home.

\_That went better than expected,\_ Kazi thought, as she walked home.

It felt like flying.

\* \* \*

><p>When she got home, it was getting dark. The chickens had put themselves in the coop, so Kazi closed the coop door before going inside.<p>

Kazi's mother, had prepared seasoned codfish for dinner. Kazi ate without thinking about it, her mind was wandering over to a certain boy, so she didn't hear when her father asked her a question. She gave a small jump when he tapped her arm. "What?"

"I said," he began again, "How was your day?"

"Oh... It was fine. I got that sword at Gobber's, like I said when I came in." She had neglected to say how she won it in a duel. Kazi had put her new blade in her room prior to dinner. "I'm going to teach one of my friends some basic swordplay tomorrowâ€"around noon."

Kazi's mom said, "Oh, that'sâ€| nice. And which friend would that be?"

"Thâ€"\_Forest\_", she stuttered. \_No more talking about Thade!\_ "She, uh, wanted to get a head-start like me on dragon training."

Her mom raised an inquisitive brow. "Theforest? I don't believe I've met that one. But good for you, Kazi, helping a friend."

Her dad commented, "but the Arms stage isn't until one of the last phases."

"Yeah, but it couldn't hurt. The longer we practice, the better we'll end up being, right?"

"True." The rest of the meal was eaten in silence, then Kazi went up to her room.

## 5. Chapter 5

\_Tap tap tap.\_

She had been sitting at her desk, pondering which moves would be best to teach Thade first, when she heard a sharp tapping on her window.

She peeked between the curtains of her window, but she didn't see anything. She sat back down, but it wasn't ten seconds before it came again. \_Tap tap tap. \_This time, she stood to the side of the window, out of view completely, even if the curtains weren't there.

\_Tap tap tap.\_

She jumped in front of the window, pulling back the curtains quickly. She surprised a small peregrine falcon, which flapped on the frame for a second, before reseating itself and staring at Kazi with big, golden eyes. \_Tap tap tap.\_

What is with this bird? Kazi slid the window open a crack, and nudged the bird's feet with a pencil, trying to shoo it. It shuffled its feet and cawed loudly, making her jump. \_What is that on its leg?\_

A tiny, cylindrical tube of leather was strapped to the falcon's left leg. Kazi grabbed a small towel from her closet so the falcon couldn't peck her, opened the window, but before she could put the towel over it, the bird jumped inside her room, and promptly landed on her bedpost.

She approached it slowly, holding her hands out, trying to avoid the sharp beak. She got close enough to touch it, and slowly produced a small, rolled up note from inside the leather pocket. It read in neat, black ink:

\_Happy Birthday, Kazi!

>Sorry that the letter is late, but it couldn't be helped. This falcon's name is Tabatha, she loves fish, and she is our gift to you. Take care of her.<br>â€" Aunt & Uncle Longsbow\_

The note pleased Kazi. \_They hadn't forgotten!\_ Aunt Longsbow, Kazi's mother's sister, had a messenger bird business on the other side of Berk in a different town. They had sent a set of fine quills as a present to Kazi every year before, and Kazi had wondered if they had forgotten to send something this year, but apparently they hadn't.

\_So, I have an bird now... But I don't know what to do with it.\_ Kazi had visited her relatives, and they had showed her all the basics of care. \_At least it already has a name, and her favorite food is some of the easiest stuff to get on Berk. Tomorrow morning I can ask the tanner if he can fashion a sleeve or shoulder pad for me. What am I going to do with her while I'm at dragon training?\_

Kazi mentally began listing the events of the next day as she fashioned a temporary bed for Tabatha. In the corner at the end of the bed, she took one towel and rolled it up, and laid it in a circle. Then she took a second towel and simply laid it over the first, creating a bowl-like shape. \_Thereâ€"a nest.\_

Kazi looked up at the bird, which was staring at her, and made towards it. She put her arm in front of its chest, saying, "Up, Tabatha." The falcon obediently stepped onto Kazi's arm, and she winced as the bird's claws gripped her arm. Kazi walked over to the nest, lowered her arm, and said, "down."

The bird calmly hopped off Kazi's arm, and settled itself into the towel. \_That was easy.\_ As she turned to get herself in bed, the

falcon flew up and perched back on the bedpost.

"Fine, sleep there. But I hope you did your business outside, because that window isn't opening until morning."

The bird stared blankly at her, before crouching down on the plank, and tucking her head behind her wing.

Kazi pulled back one blanket, and settled onto a thicker one for padding over the bare wood. She settled herself under the covers, then blew out the lamp and went to sleep, dreaming about sword fighting and Thade.

\* \* \*

><p>Kazi woke with the sun filtering through her curtains. <em>Dad must be out early. <em>Tabatha was still sleeping right where she had settled, but woke up as Kazi got out of bed. First thing, Kazi pulled the curtains back and opened the window, and before she knew it, Tabatha was out and into the sky.

Putting on her overclothes, Kazi went downstairs for chores. She let the chickens out, then went down to the fresh water stream to refill the bucket of water, before replacing it back in the coop. They had enough food, so Kazi went to collect eggs. Six went into the basket, but one had cracked. That one went straight to the fireworms, along with a small one.

Kazi and her mother ate more eggs topped with minced fried fish. They discussed her new pet, and what they would need to properly care for it.

After breakfast, Kazi went to the tanner's shop as planned, with her sword. Arron measured her shoulder in a few different angles as well as the sword to make a sheath, sketching out requirements onto a sheet of paper. When he had all he needed, Kazi gave him a small pouch of coins and headed toward the seacliff, as noon was not far off.

She didn't have to wait long before Thade showed up, he had brought a sword from home. She led him down toward the hideout, and he was impressed with how sophisticated the gang had made it. "Let's practice in this clear spot, so we won't be in the way if the others show up." Kazi said, taking two shields off the cavern wall and handing one to Thade.

"Sounds good to me," Thade replied, taking the shield.

"Then lets get started. Lesson one: Stance. you need to find a position you can return to after dealing a blow. You must be comfortable yet with your weapon at ready, and be able to move in any way with the slightest of warning." Kazi demonstrated: her left foot forward, right foot to the side, knees slightly bent. Right hand holding the sword in a relaxed yet steady position, left out with a good grip on the shield.

Thade got in a similar stance, but he was right-handed, so his form was a mirror to Kazi. "Like this?"

"Yeah, but you can hold your sword arm a little lower." He complied.

"And don't be so tense; you won't be able to respond as quick. Bend your knees."

"This feels more right," he commented. "Now what?"

He almost didn't finish speaking before Kazi lunged with her sword out. He only barely held up the shield in time to avoid a blow to his right shoulder. "Lesson two: Be ready for anything," she said, backing off. "Good job with going with the shield. Leave it to more advanced Vikings to use the sword to block."

"Like you did with Preston?" He asked, and Kazi nodded. "But those sparks added a nice touch."

"They sure did." This time, Thade lifted the sword up and swung it diagonally, aiming to knock Kazi's sword from her hand. She easily sidestepped, throwing him off balance. She tossed the shield aside, and as she brought her hand back she grasped Thade's sword wrist, gave it a good twist, and ended up pinning it to Thade's back while holding his shoulder in her other hand.

They broke apart again. "You're good," Thade commented.

"Thanks," replied Kazi. "You too."

## 6. Chapter 6

Over some time, Kazi's friends began to show up, and they rearranged the logs around the fire pit to watch. They shouted encouraging tips, taking sides. Each side cheered for one person: Sidia, Sage, and Fora for Kazi, and Nate, Drew and Grant for Thade.

They sparred for more than an hour, and by the end they were both parched and sweaty.

"I think I'm done for the day," Thade panted. Kazi nodded in agreement. Once Thade knew the basic moves, he turned out to be a good match for Kazi. All he lacked was real-combat experience.

"That was fun," Nate said.

"You didn't even do anything!" Drew mock-scolded, punching him in the shoulder.

"What now?" Kazi asked, hanging up the shields. "My sheath and shoulder pad won't be ready until at least tomorrow, so I have time to kill."

Fora suggested, "Why don't we go fishing?" The group nodded and murmured agreement, then went outside to the docks.

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><p>They fished catch-and-release for most of the afternoon, then bought a small sack of pre-salted fish each for their families.<p>

When Kazi got home, she closed the chicken coop, set the fish bag on the counter and leaned her sword against the wall before going back

outside to call for Tabatha.

It only took two sharp whistles to bring her back. \_At least she was pre-trained, Kazi thought.\_ She expected that the falcon had fed herself. Tabatha landed on Kazi's arm, who winced from the talons, then turned and went back inside.

She lowered Tabatha to the windowsill in the dining area, where she settled herself while keeping a watchful eye. Kazi offered her a small fish, which she refused. "I take it you're fed," she murmured.

Kazi's father had been out all day, but wouldn't tell where he'd been when the family ate dinner, so they didn't pursue the matter. Kazi and her mother filled him in on the details of why they had a bird in the window.

After dinner, Kazi took Tabatha up to her room and put her on the bedpost where she'd slept the other night. Almost as soon as the falcon settled in the perch, she tucked her head back to sleep. "Flying must be exhausting," Kazi said to the bird, and was not surprised when she was met with no response.

She sat at her desk, and pulled out some paper and one of her quills from last year. She considered herself an aspiring artist; and many people were impressed with even her simplest doodles. She was beginning to compete with even Hiccup with her most devoted work. He had taught her a few pointers when she was younger, and she'd made the most of them.

She began with a rough outline of a certain dragon in flight. Large wings, two muscular legs, and a gradual slope of the back with sharp spines. She made a flat oval for the head.

She next made out the details of the head in smooth, quick strokes. The nose curved up into a thin horn, the eyes large and piercing. She drew a crown of horns across the back of its head: five on top, and three on each side of its jaws. She drew an open mouth, with many small yet razor-sharp teeth lining the lips. She sketched a bolt of lightning flying from its maw, bursting on some invisible target

Slowly but surely, the form of a Skrill took place. Fearsome yet graceful, dangerous but beautiful.

She sat back to admire her work. The Skrill seemed to come alive with the strokes of Kazi's quill; smooth and controlled. Locked in flight, with the bolt of lightning looking almost real.

She reached for her colored pastes. They had costed her a hefty price from trader Johann, but they had paid for themselves a few times over. She had colored her best paintings—mostly dragons and their riders—and sold them around the village for reasonable prices.

Kazi squeezed a blot of black onto a pad. She then mixed in a bit of blue, creating a midnight blue color, perfect for the body of her Skrill. She used a soft-haired brush and dipped it in the paste. She then softly stroked the paper, coating the Skrill in a smooth color. She added some white or more black to create highlights. Thankfully,

she used the whole dollop of mixed paint, so she didn't waste any.

She proceeded to mix a dramatic shade of iridescent blue by using black, blue and silver. She brushed the paint lightly over the midnight color behind the eyes, on the underside of its wings, underlining the lightning. She then made it into an electric blue, which she painted the lightning and eyes with, with some sparks around the body in general.

Then, she had a last-minute ideaâ€”but the paint was still wetâ€”so she couldn't add it in until the next day. \_Perfect time to go to bed\_, she thought. \_I can contemplate the details before I fall asleep.\_

And with that she undressed and got in bed, then tucked herself in and blew out her oil lamp.

\_Dragon Training starts in two days...\_ Was last thought before drifting off to sleep.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>I know it was a relatively short chapter, but I met my personal deadline. Chapter 7 should be up before next Saturday, but please cut me some slack.<strong>

\*\*Reviews are much appreciated.\*\*

End  
file.